

The Sunday School.

A RESUME OF THE S. S. MOVEMENT.

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To Robert Raikes of Gloucester, England, has been conferred the honor of first founding the S. S. movement. And although, the latest authors, differ as to this fact, we shall proceed in our paper upon this supposition.

This movement was started under peculiar circumstances. Raikes and his friend Mr. King, were walking one day on a street in Gloucester, and chanced to pass a group of children, who were engaged in such sports as were not thought commendable. "What a pity," said his friend, "That the Sabbath should be so desecrated." "But how can it be helped?" asked Raikes. This simple remark put Mr. Raikes to thinking, and from this time on, his mind was continually impressed with those degrading things. Was there not something that could be done. On close investigation he found that a very small number of the young people of the city received any education whatever. And as he was walking along one day, he exclaimed, "Can nothing be done?" A voice seemed to say, "Try." He did try, and we know the result.

Later, he gathered together a number of ragged children on a Sunday and proposed first, to teach them to read and learn the church catechism. He employed four women who kept dame schools through the week, for a shilling each Sabbath. The plan proved a success, and by the co operation of the Rev. Thomas Stock, a clergyman of Gloucester, he was enabled to carry it on in a most vigorous spirit. The improvement in the town became so marked that Bishop of the Diocese wrote Raikes a letter of grateful acknowledgement. In a short time the movement spread to other large towns of England, and in 1785 it was taken up by a society in London, which may be called the parent of the present Sunday-school Union. Raikes still pursued his work however as long as strength permitted. A touching story is told of his old age. When seventy-two, he was walking one day, leaning on the arm of his friend, Joseph Lancaster, (the chief pioneer of national education.) The old man led his friend to the spot where his first school started. "Pause here," he said, and uncovered his head; whilst closing his eyes for a moment engaged in silent prayer. Then turning to Mr. Lancaster, he said, while the tears rolled down his cheeks, "This is the spot on which I stood when I saw the desecration of the Sabbath, by

the inhabitants of the city." As I said to myself, "Can nothing be done?" a voice seemed to say "try." I did try, and now "what hath God wrought?" I never pass by this place where the word "try" came so powerfully to my mind, without lifting up my hands and heart to heaven in gratitude to God, for having put such a thought into my mind.

All glory to this great man, and God bless those who had so much sympathy and love as to erect a monument to his memory. God hasten the time when every village shall have at least one self-sacrificing man, who is willing to do a little work for God for little things count so very much.

It never once entered the mind of Raikes, what a great work had really been commenced. And could he have been permitted to have had just one glance at the masses assembled at Boston, the past summer, who had met for the purpose of still furthering on the good work, or could he only be stationed some Sabbath morning as to see the great throng of workers in the S. S. he would surely exclaim more emphatically, "What hath God wrought?"

Still the S. S. work is advancing. At the present time there are enrolled in the world 233,818 schools, with an army of 24,405,610 scholars, of which Canada has 9,097, with 721,435 scholars. While the U. S. follows up with over half of this great number, having 132,639 schools, with 12,286,000 scholars.

Coming down to our own beloved state, according to the last statistics of the state union we find it at the end of the three past years, in the lead. No other having made the progress it has. How thankful to God we should be for these amazing numbers. 5,306 schools, 60,538 officers and teachers, 425,922 scholars. By a careful investigation, it has been found that of this number 40 per cent. are adults, 60 per cent. are children under twenty-one. On this basis, we now have 295,710 children or 40 per cent. in S. S. while 438,930 or 60 per cent. are out of S. S.

The number of schools organized in Indiana the past year was 366, one for each day during the year, or seven each Sabbath. Number received into church fellowship, 20,025, 5286 more than the number reported last year or a gain of 41 per cent. It means that on an average 385 S. S. workers joined the church every Sunday last year. This is very surprising and amazing.

Out of our 5,206 schools 3,709 are evergreens, 1,597 are still in the poor habit of closing their doors. 208 of the schools which formerly closed, ran all last year, and many found they could run stronger

in winter than in the summer. And also our teachers meetings are increasing from last year, there was a gain of 140 or 39 per cent. being in all 497 meetings.

There is quite a large number without the Sunday-school yet. What shall we do? "Try" try again. Let that word which gave the founder so much courage come to us, and by divine assistance, instill us to a deeper consecration, not only to working, but also as to giving, should each person give a shilling towards the work as was pursued by Raikes, how long would it be until every one should hear the glad tidings? In just our own state, should each scholar give one dime at least each Sabbath, we would have the enormous sum of \$2,519,592 for God's work. Should each one in the United States give one dime we would have the almost incomparable figures of \$63,887,200, and I am sure each individual could do this, feeling better themselves and of honoring God also.

And, in conclusion let me ask, shall we not put forth every effort within our power to assist in this great movement? Shall we not sacrifice a little? Shall we not individually do our best that God's cause may be heralded to every point, that all children shall have in this enlightened age, a chance to hear the word, and to prepare for heaven and immortal glory.

THOUGHTS FOR S. S. WORKERS.

The forces which make for Christian unity in our day will never grow less. If the Sunday-school movement lives, they will grow greater, and it will not die. It is changing the face of our country. It is modifying the architecture of our churches. It has created a literature of its own, and its spirit is affecting all other literature. Such a movement cannot go backward, and, if it go forward, it will draw all churches and all Christians more closely together each day. It will bind all sections and all lands together in bonds of indissoluble brotherhood. The day of sectionalism and sectarianism in this land is gone to return no more.—*Reynolds*.

O pastors, pastors, never utter a word that might be construed in your Sunday-school as casting a reflection on the mental caliber of your teachers. If they are not as wise as they might be, get them right around you, speak loving words to them, touch them—unless you have no inspiration in yourselves, and if so you had better get out of the pulpit as quickly as possible and give way to some fellows who have some life in them.—*Lorimer*.

As a business man, looking at things from the practical standpoint, I am convinced that none of us can give our hands, and hearts, and money so effectively to anything that will please the country to so large a degree as the work of clearing up the mists about the Sunday-school, of insisting that it shall have a fair consideration and of finding for it the support of these United States, to spread its blessedness, if we are to have very much joy of it in our own hearts, while the Lord permits us to stay on the earth.—*Wanamaker*.